

Approved

Fire Station Building Committee:
Minutes of Meeting November 6, 2003
Town Hall Conference Room #4 7:00 p.m.

Present: Robert McLaughlin, Chairman, Leo Saidnawey, Vice-Chairman, David Baldwin, Joanne Coakley, John Greene, Linda Oates, William Shea, William Webster. Also present: Belmont Fire Chief William Osterhaus, Assistant Chief David Frizzell and from Donham & Sweeney Brett Donham.

Residents Elfriede Anderson of 548 Pleasant St, Hilary Baldwin of 122 Leonard Street, Daniel Morris of 14 Alexander Ave, Constance Brown of 110 Leonard Street, Graci and Leon deMagistris of 19 Alexander Ave and Subbiah Doraiswami of 560 Pleasant Street.

There being a quorum, the Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Comments followed:

- Defer reading of minutes until later in the meeting.

Member Oates: According to Sandra Curro in the Selectman's Office, our Committee delivers meeting minutes in a timely manner; this is something she would like to see happen on a continuous basis.

Chairman McLaughlin: Received call from Wallace Floyd re: reasons why they were not chosen. He discussed issues mentioned in meeting on October 23, 2003 and stated the most prevalent reason was their lack of experience building fire stations.

Chairman McLaughlin: He had a conversation with Brett Donham of Donham & Sweeney regarding the contract and the negotiations that still need to take place. (Topic also on the agenda provided by Brett Donham). We need to agree upon the final language and negotiated sum. Should have a Sub-Committee to do this. Vice Chair Saidnawey volunteers and Member Shea is nominated to be on Sub-Committee.

Chairman McLaughlin: David Hawkins has approved the contract in generic form but we still need to approve the final negotiated contract.

Member Baldwin: Moves to have Sub-Committee of three (Chairman McLaughlin, Vice Chair Saidnawey & Member Shea) to work on contract approval.
Motion seconded.

Chairman McLaughlin: Welcome Brett Donham to meeting. Thank you for taking a fresh approach to the project and we look forward to working with you.

Brett Donham: Great pleasure being here. He is excited and looking forward to work with the Committee.

Chairman McLaughlin to residents attending meeting: This is a public meeting and you are welcome to listen, but are not allowed to speak unless the Committee asks you to. If there is time at the end of the meeting you will each be given time to make comments.

Chairman McLaughlin: Brett Donham provided us with an agenda of issues to discuss right away. We are shooting for January 15, 2004 for the schematic design and for the first week in April 2004 for debt exclusion.

Brett Donham: Passes agendas to members of the Committee. Thank you for your confidence expressed and asking me and my firm to work on this project.

- Members go around the table and introduce themselves to Brett Donham.
- Asks members to what their goals for the project are:

Asst. Chief Frizzell: Function, efficiency, low maintenance buildings.

Chief Osterhaus: Space for functionality.

Member Baldwin: As a preservationist, wants a building(s) that will be attractive for the next 100 years & adds to the Center. Concerned with public safety and the neighborhood/neighbors. Wants a building(s) that is efficient, economic to run and as "green" as possible.

Member Coakley: Agrees with comments made by Member Baldwin. She feels the Trapelo Rd project is the flagship project and from it, others can gain a sense of design (in hopes of building the area up). She also wants project as "green" as possible. Also believes the fire service interacts with the community. It is a vision – think boldly.

Chairman McLaughlin: Wants project to be on time, on budget, a project we can be proud of, fulfill function and needs to Town. Aesthetically pleasing, especially in the Center, a pleasing design. Trapelo Rd is a jump-start to development of the area.

Member Oates: Seconds comments made by Chairman McLaughlin.

Member Greene: Functional, well-working, last for a long time. No surprises in design, development, once architects leave the project, no surprises with the process.

Member Webster: Echoes many of the items mentioned by other members. Does not want anything overly designed. On budget, on time, as "green" as possible, practical. As an example: radiant heat used for floors of station.

Brett Donham: Radiant heat in living quarters and apparatus room?

Member Webster: Keep both at a constant temperature.

Member Shea: Concerned about traffic flow at Alexander Ave and in Center. We need to look at traffic. Wants a building that looks good and sets itself apart from other buildings.

Member Coakley: Will there be room for female firefighters?

Brett Donham & Committee Members: Yes.

Brett Donham: Views everything he does as an issue of public record.

Chairman McLaughlin: What is the process from now until January 15, 2004?

Brett Donham: He needs a good bit of input from Committee; there is quite a spread of goals, need to determine collectively that the goals being met. Committee should meet bi-weekly. Committee agrees, Thursdays are good for everyone, may need more than bi-weekly meetings. A tentative schedule of meetings is determined:

November 20th, December 4th, December 18th, January 8, 2004. Stacey will schedule meeting with Sandra Curro.

Member Baldwin: Need schematic design and time for debt exclusion.

Chairman McLaughlin: The intention is to hold meeting in each neighborhood, not sure exactly when that will be, need to get notices out to as many people as soon as possible (use newspaper as a resource).

Vice Chair Saidnawey: Suggests using glass information booths at both sites. Need to think about this as soon as possible. Use booths to post drawings, keep everyone informed. Member Coakley seconds motion.

Asst. Chief Frizzell: What is the cost for booths?

Vice Chair Saidnawey to research cost and notify members.

Brett Donham: Any type of community input/outreach is good.

Chairman McLaughlin: Agrees with Vice Chair Saidnawey. He worries about rumors, what goes into the booths needs to be carefully phrased as "work in process."

Member Coakley: We should utilize the website re: meeting schedules.

Vice Chair Saidnawey: Asks Brett, when will we have shadow drawings?

Brett Donham: When we meet November 20th should have 2-3 schematic plans for each site. Will be difficult but will allow for functional impact on neighbors, etc. Probably have something on December 4th and December 18th have something closer to what represents what the buildings will look like.

Vice Chair Saidnawey: It will help to have the community kept informed of the process.

Member Oates: When should we have neighborhood meetings in December?

Chairman McLaughlin: Very important to get community input/feedback.

Brett Donham: Should have floor plans week of December 8th.

Prospective dates for Public Meetings: December 15th (VFW/Trapelo Road), December 17th (Selectman's Office/Town Hall).

Chairman McLaughlin: How do we notify the public?

- Member Webster will get list of abutters (street names) within 300 feet of both prospective fire station locations.

- Suggestion to make an announcement at Town Meeting on November 17th.

Brett Donham: On the topic of contract negotiation; Sub-Committee created to deal with that. From agenda, asks Committee to look over broken down fee proposal.

Chairman McLaughlin: There is a perceived problem with fee structure, comparison of fee proposal received in May versus one received in November.

- Sub-Committee will look into expenses and present to Committee.

Chairman McLaughlin: Mentions some issues:

1 - Brett Donham to give lump sum figure. He wants Brett to be person responsible for dealing with Sub-contractors, etc.

2 - The issue of parking. Brett, is the figure given in the new proposal with out Claflin Street? Brett Donham: Yes.

Chairman McLaughlin: The schematic design fee may be increased.

Asst. Chief Frizzell: Some money was carried over to the Acquisition Budget for geotechnical issues and removal of tanks.

Brett Donham: In May I knew nothing about the Trapelo Road site; the May budget was strictly geotechnical, supporting budget, etc. Since May further testing of contaminations on site. He assumed cost of additional services, it is just his guess of what the extra costs will be for buried tanks, etc. Need to explore interior of building and what is under the foundation.

Chairman McLaughlin: We may be able to acquire a site that is ready to go; this may free up extra funds. To what extent is the Committee responsible for removing the tanks on Trapelo Road?

Member Baldwin: Removal of the tanks is not the Committee's role. Nor does he feel qualified to make the decision re: possible contamination and remediation of any contamination.

Other Committee members agree, removal of tanks is not their role, nor should the cost come out of the budget.

Member Baldwin: Brett, will the work on Trapelo Road hold you up? Brett: No, not the layout, it could have cost impact. Ideally, I would like to have the building demolished and the slab ripped up to test soil. Brett suspects site has high water table.

Chairman McLaughlin: Does anyone have an update on the Town's acquisition of the land?

- Land should be acquired December 1, 2003.

Chief Osterhaus: We have a December 1st deadline for submitting request (submitting letter of intent) for grant money for the removal of the tank(s) on Trapelo Road.

Brett Donham: The Committee may want to postpone taking the land until a survey of the land has been received. I am prepared to commission the survey of the land by Harry K. Feldman. Survey should be ready December 15th.

Chairman McLaughlin: Asks Chief Osterhaus to get in touch with Mel Kleckner re: budget and timing of tank(s) removal, also who is responsible for removal of tank(s). Important to let Mel Kleckner know that the Committee is short on time.

Member Greene: It is important we get the testing done ASAP.

Member Shea: What does grant cover?

Chief Osterhaus: It covers removal/disposal of the tank(s) only.

Brett Donham: Touches upon another changes in the budget:

- Assistance with zoning issues. Assumption is that zoning variances will be needed prior to Town meeting. If not, then cost goes down \$5,000.

Chairman McLaughlin: It is the smart thing to do to get the zoning variances done sooner than later.

Chairman McLaughlin: Does not want to be “nickel and dimed”; the Sub-Committee needs to review the contract closely. He also wants a provision that service ends 60 days after contract completion date. Need to discuss this with Sub-Committee and find language that is fair to both sides.

Brett Donham: The over-whelming majority of contracts he works on is with building Committees. The Chairman can contact him if the Committee needs immediate answers.

- Chairman McLaughlin agrees to be the contact person for now.

Member Oates: We need to look into the issue of parking in the Center and Claflin Street. This not an issue the Committee should be dealing with. The Parking Committee should get involved, if they want to get involved.

Brett Donham: Next topic on Agenda, the extent of greenness/sustainability. The use of recycled materials and level of energy efficient materials is something Donham & Sweeney would do anyways. The issue is to use more exotic materials; more exotic materials are more costly.

Member Shea: Stay away from LEEDS-certified material. Better to stick to a more energy efficient design.

Vice-Chair Saidnawey: LEEDS-certified materials/products is very involved and there are a lot of issues with it. It is best to build a solid building. He agrees with collecting rainwater to run the toilets and watering the lawn, etc.

Asst Chief Frizzell: Important for buildings to be efficient, but building maintenance is an issue.

Chief Osterhaus: The buildings don't need to be LEEDS-certified, but we can incorporate a lot of energy saving items, but not where it costs so much to run it. Important to find efficient materials.

Member Baldwin: The Committee should look at LEEDS-certified and not discount it. Suggests looking at passive solar, etc. Should design a building that is well insulated and have a low maintenance cost. It is better to pay a bit more for good technology with a good payback.

Member Coakley: Seconds the comments made by Member Baldwin. It is important to use as much solar technology as possible. Present the estimate payback period of such technologies at the Public Meetings.

Chairman McLaughlin: The new state building codes require a lot of energy efficiency. Anything we receive for nothing concerning sustainable design should be pursued, when the technologies start to cost money he wants to know payback. We cannot mix up our needs with our wants.

Brett Donham: For example, flooring: Vinyl tile is made from non-renewable resources, can use linoleum instead which is made of entirely renewable resources. It costs 60% more than vinyl.

Asst. Chief Frizzell: Concerned about systems that take up a great amount of space.

Member Oates: Prime concern is materials used within the building, does not want anything that is fibrous, can be inhaled, etc.

Brett Donham: Is very cautious when using new materials; is very cautious of materials he uses.

Member Greene: These are working buildings, people will be here 24/7. Need a climate control system, the air needs to be cleaned, air needs to be cool in summer and warm in winter. Concerned with carbon monoxide and building maintenance, needs to be low maintenance. Some times simpler is better.

Member Webster: Echoes many of things that have been said. He refers to Donham & Sweeney's PowerPoint presentation:

Indoor materials: Use paint with low VOC's, be careful of synthetic carpets (can cause asthma/respiratory problems).

Brett Donham: The buildings should be very tight, combustion fumes/apparatus room sealed off from rest of building. There should be a discussion of radiant heat.

Chief Osterhaus: There should be carpeting only in the offices.

Member Coakley: Concerned about landscaping and use of trees.

Brett Donham: Topic of heat gain versus heat loss. Should discuss planted room, 1 foot of soil and grass. Should have emergency generators at both buildings. There is no room in the buildings for them, best to put them on the outside of the building.

- Are generators fired by diesel or natural gas? Diesel is a self-contained fuel source.
- There is an issue of noise; the generators have to be run weekly.

Chairman McLaughlin: Issue of generators is up in the air; it is a design issue we need to grapple with.

Chairman McLaughlin: Is it possible not to have Zoning Variances?

Brett Donham: Trapelo Road height issue and set back issue on Alexander Avenue.

Brett Donham: Next issue on agenda is issue of traffic lights and/or controls.

Chief Osterhaus: Use an Opticom System. Trapelo Road will need light in front of station. Alexander site needs to be tied into Pleasant Street.

Brett Donham: Agenda item: Alexander Ave site, topic of re-grading etc.

Chief Osterhaus: The construction site needs to be fenced during construction.

Asst. Chief Frizzell: The Committee needs to have dialogue with "T".

Chairman McLaughlin: Is the Parking Committee doing anything?

Member Oates: As a courtesy, we should tell them what we are doing.

Comment from Leon de Magistris (resident of 19 Alexander Ave): He is a member of the Parking Committee. Their last meeting is next week (week of November 10, 2003); the Parking Committee is interested in what is happening behind fire station. The Parking Committee is split, is not leaning towards a garage, there is no solid recommendation for a garage. Kevin Foley (or Selectman) to receive written report after The Parking Committee's next meeting on Monday, November 10, 2003.

Chairman McLaughlin: Asks residents if they have comments to make.

Resident Constance Brown of 110 Leonard Street: She asks that the Committee be aware of the neighbors, is concerned about rodents from the construction. How is the Committee planning to protect the neighbors from the chaos of the construction? All of the neighbors are concerned with the construction, design, landscaping, disruptions and confusion of the construction. She wants a pleasant looking building and property.

Vice-Chairman Saidnawey? Would you like a glass information booth? Resident Brown: Yes.

Resident Leon de Magistris: Asks that the Committee pay attention to Belmont Center, it is a friendly Center, important to have a building that belongs there; a building that blends with what is already there. Make the building as appealing as possible. Is it possible to have entrance to fire station on Alexander Avenue side? No, issue of the slope.

Member Baldwin: Concerned about the noise from the A/C units, keep the equipment noise to a minimum.

Resident Subbiah Duraiswami of 560 Pleasant Street: Why can't the fire station remain where it is and renovate it?

Chairman McLaughlin: A feasibility study was conducted and it is more expensive to renovate than it is to build a new one.

Member Baldwin: Everyone should be invited from the Leonard Street area to our meetings over the next 8 weeks, it is important to have his or her input.

Chairman McLaughlin: Requests that the minutes be distributed to all Committee members prior to meetings. Stacey will email/fax minutes when they are complete.

Final comments from Committee Members:

Member Oates: Has a request for Assistant Chief Frizzell and Chief Osterhaus that a member of the Committee be present at all meetings with the architects. Member Oates is available for meetings that begin at 8:00 a.m.

Upon a motion by Member Baldwin, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Oates, Clerk